

Maryanne Demasi, reports

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EXCLUSIVE: Lead author of Cochrane mask review responds to Fauci's dismissal of evidence



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Former chief medical advisor to the US President Anthony Fauci, was questioned over the weekend by CNN reporter Michael Smerconish, about face masks being able to curb the spread of covid-19.

"There's no doubt that masks work," said Fauci.

"Different studies give different percentages of advantage of wearing it, but there's no doubt that the weight of the studies ... indicate the benefit of wearing masks," he added.

Smerconish brought up the 2023 Cochrane review which found no evidence that physical interventions like face masks could stop viral transmission in the community and cited my interview with lead author of the study Tom Jefferson who confirmed, "There is just no evidence that they [masks] make any difference. Full stop."



EXCLUSIVE: Lead author of new Cochrane review speaks out

Tom Jefferson, senior associate tutor at the University of Oxford, is the lead author of a recent Cochrane review that has 'gone viral' on social media and re-ignited one of the most divisive debates during the pandemic - face masks. The updated review titled \dots

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Fauci replied, "Yeah but there are other studies," stressing that masks work on an individual basis.

"When you're talking about the effect on the epidemic or the pandemic as a whole, the data are less strong...but when you talk about an individual basis of someone protecting themselves or protecting themselves from spreading it to others, there's no doubt that there are many studies that show there is an advantage," said Fauci.

Professor Tom Jefferson, who says he is committed to updating the Cochrane review as new evidence emerges, has responded to Fauci's comments.

"So, Fauci is saying that masks work for individuals but not at a population level? That simply doesn't make sense," said Jefferson

"And he says there are 'other studies'...but what studies? He doesn't name them so I cannot interpret his remarks without knowing what he is referring to," he added.

Jefferson explains that the entire point of the Cochrane review was to systematically sift through all the available randomised data on physical interventions such as masks and determine what was useful and what was not.

Since 2011, the Cochrane review only included randomised trials to minimise bias from confounders.

"It might be that Fauci is relying on trash studies," said Jefferson. "Many of them are observational, some are crosssectional, and some actually use modelling. That is not strong evidence."

"Once we excluded such low-quality studies from the review, we concluded there was no evidence that masks reduced transmission," he added.

The problem with Fauci is that his story has changed

Initially, Fauci said that masks were ineffective and unnecessary. In March 2020, Fauci told 60 minutes, "Right now in the United States, people should not be walking around with masks."

But only a few weeks later, he did a U-turn and began recommending widespread use of face masks.

Fauci defended his U-turn saying, "When the facts change, I change my mind."

Jefferson retorted, "What facts changed? There were no randomised studies, no new evidence to justify his flip-flop. That's simply not true."





Since then, Fauci has remained adamant that face masks not only stop people from infecting others, but they also protect

Fauci advocated for the use of cloth masks, and even encouraged double-masking in the absence of evidence.

"You put another layer on, it just makes common sense that it would be more effective," Fauci told NBC news.

"What Fauci doesn't understand is that cloth and surgical masks cannot stop viruses because viruses are too small and they still get through," said Jefferson

He laments that public figures have tried to undermine the Cochrane review, despite it representing the gold standard of evidence.

Columnist Zeynep Tufekci wrote an article in the New York Times titled, "Here's Why the Science Is Clear That Masks Work," claiming that Cochrane's mask study had misled the public.

Cochrane's editor in chief, Karla Soares-Weiser capitulated to pressure and "apologised" for the wording in the plain language summary of the review because it "was open to misinterpretation" and may have led to "inaccurate and misleading" claims

And former CDC director Rochelle Walensky misled Congress after claiming the Cochrane review had been "retracted" which was patently false.

As it stands, the Cochrane review will continue to be the subject of attacks because it presents a major roadblock for implementing masking policies. Jefferson says he doesn't know what motivates people to ignore the facts.

"Could it be part of this whole agenda to control people's behaviour? Perhaps," he speculated.

"What I do know," said Jefferson, "is that Fauci was in a position to run a trial, he could have randomised two regions to wear masks or not. But he didn't and that's unforgivable."

Fauci, who served as the federal government's top infectious disease specialist for nearly 40 years, stepped down in Dec 2022 and is now a professor at Georgetown University's Department of Medicine, in the Division of Infectious Diseases.

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Gareth Thomas 3 hrs ago Liked by Maryanne Demasi, PhD

What the wearing of masks is successful in achieving is spreading terror among the population and encouraging a depersonalized populace to meekly accept what the "experts" tell them.

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This was always an exercise in herd control and authoritarianism where rogue actors were to be destroyed. "Science" never came into it, other than the "science" of psyop techniques.

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Jillian Stirling2 hrs ago Liked by Maryanne Demasi, PhD

It really is appalling how disingenuous and dishonest Fauci can be. He has wrought great havoc on the health systems in the west.

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